

No 72

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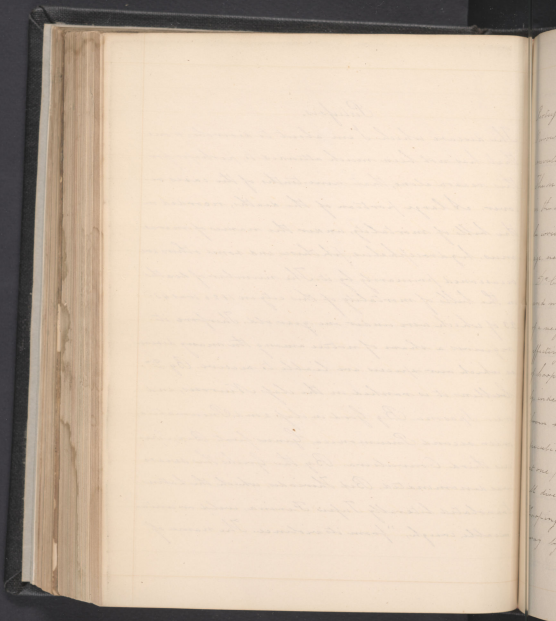
Paid March 5th 1828

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An Inaugural Essay
on
Portulaca
for
The Degree
of
Doctor of Medicine
in the
University of Pennsylvania
by
Charles H. Beppett
of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia
January 27th 1828.

Pellivis.

The disease which I am about to describe, is one that has not been much attended to, perhaps for this reason alone, that nine-tenths of the cases recover. A large portion of the deaths, recorded in the bills of mortality, under the names of marasmus, hydrocephalus, phthisis and some others are occasioned primarily by it. The number of deaths in the bills of mortality of this city in 1826 was 483 of which were under one year old. Therefore it requires a share of notice among the many diseases which our species are liable to receive. By Dr. Cullen it is ranked in the class Nervous, and under Spasmodic. By Gort in class 2nd, Pneumatica, order second Pneumonia, Genus first Bex, Species third Convulsiva. By the Greeks this disease was denominated, Bex Theriaca, which the Latins translated literally Tufus Furiosa, wild or untamable, enough, "from its violence. The name of



Perhaps is derived from per much and tufer cough.
Common name of Hooping-cough is derived from the
convulsive danger which accompanies the fit.

The name of Whooping-cough by which it is distinguished
in the North of Europe and which should rather
be written kind: "a child," as being peculiar to this
age, nevertheless it occurs in advanced life.

Dr Cullen says this cough is commonly epidemic,
and manifestly contagious, attacking all the children
of a neighbourhood into which it has been introduced,
affecting some more than others. The remote cause
of hooping-cough is often difficult to trace. Frequent-
ly, indeed, like common cough it seems to proceed
from some irritability of the stomach or some
peculiar affection of the lungs. By Linnaeus who
at one period of his life endeavoured to reduce almost
all diseases into an animalcular origin, taught that
hooping-cough was also produced in the same
way by an insect of a peculiar kind.

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It rarely attacks more than once in a man's life.
And from all these circumstances there can be
little doubt that it proceeds, in most instances from
a miasm of a specific nature and peculiar quality,
which like those of the influenza or epidemical
catarrhs, and the miasm has direct determination
to the lungs, though it is not, like these contagions
essentially linked with fever. The proximate or imme-
diate cause seems to be a viscid matter or phlegm
lodged about the bronchiae, trachea, and fauces.

Symptoms. It begins with the common symptoms
of catarrhs, from which indeed it cannot be dis-
tinguished by any known criterion for the first
week. It has been observed, that the usual catarrhal
symptoms are here accompanied with a more than
ordinary disposition to sleep, and those which de-
note general fever are seldom very strongly mark-
ed. About the end of the second or beginning of
the third week, the symptoms undergo a remark-
able change; the fever declines, and appetite returns,
but the cough continues, and recurs in paroxysms.

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of extraordinary violence. The child struggles for
breath, and appears in great danger of suffocation
until relieved by the long and full inspiration
known under the name of the back draught or heep.
The excretion is at first small in quantity, but after
wards more copious, though always mixed. The heep
is often accompanied with a rejection of the contents
of the stomach, and occasionally by bleeding at the
nose or an epileptic paroxysm, sometimes ac- V
companied about the eye, and the whole system during the
paroxysm suffers great violence. The face is livid
and purple from suffusion and the eyeballs swollen
and prominent. The little patient with a forewarning
of the attack, falls on his knees at the time making
any thing near him. Yet the violence is instantly
forgotten; and after deeply panting for breath, he
returns with as much eagerness as ever to his play
or other pursuit; while the vomiting which is gene-
rally a good sign, is succeeded by a craving for
fresh food. Dr. Parrival, relates a singular case, O
which occurred daily at a certain hour attended,

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with a tremor of the whole body; the fit terminating
by a shrick rather than a scream. The complaint was
obstinate for several months and returned at the same
season for two years. It yielded to no medicines
and was supposed to depend on some morbid con-
dition of the liver. The fits vary much in frequency.
In mild cases they do not occur more than three or
four times a day. In severe ones they beset the patient
every half hour. It is very rare to find them recurring
at regular intervals. They are often brought on by
visions of body or emotions of mind. Whatever
hurries the circulation, seems to excite the paroxysm
whenever the disease is contagious. It is common there-
fore to find the child unable to speak or
move. Whatever occupies the mind, powerfully,
(to the entire exclusion of other impressions) will
provoke the paroxysm, unless it excite the
action of the heart. The dread of corporeal in-
vestigation has prevented the recurrence of the
fits in children, till they discovered the object
of the threat. A greater degree of fear which pro-

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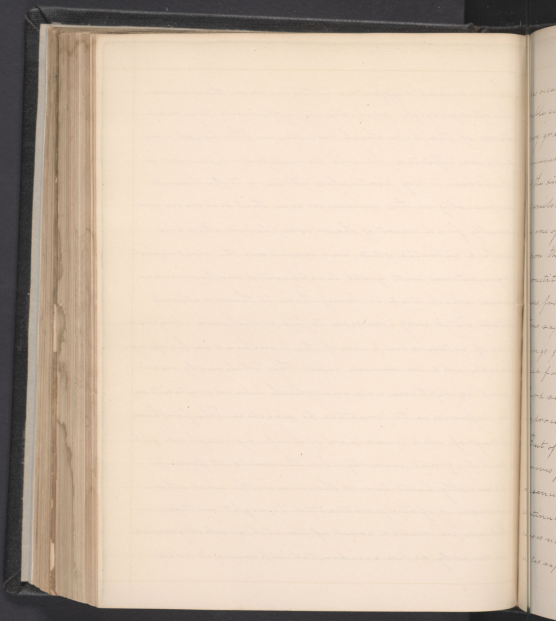
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feel the mind so entirely as to extinguish all hope of temporal salvation has cured the disease. Dr. Potter relates the cases of two children. The one aged seven, the other ten years and six months old, were rescued from a house in flames a few minutes before the roof fell in. The elder was in a state of syncope, and the other was lying on the floor nearly exhausted, speechless and incapable of motion. The elder did not cough afterwards, nor discover any symptom of the disease, but convalesced rapidly, the younger coughed twice on the succeeding day, and from that time gradually recovered without any sign of bronchial or pulmonary disease. The elder had laboured under pertussis about fourteen, and the younger about seventeen days. When once the disease has assumed its regular form, the appetite is good and thirst is strikingly displayed in the craving for food, which comes on when the fit terminates, or ceases. The tongue is always clean and moist. There is no difficulty of breathing in the intervals of the fit.

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Permanent dyspnoea betokens more than mere
hooping-cough, probably an inflammatory condi-
tion of the bronchial membrane. The bowels are
seldom affected. It will be necessary however in
children to pay particular attention to the bowels,
especially in the summer as in that season we gen-
erally find most of their complaints attended
with a vitiated state, and sometimes the most urgent
symptoms will yield to cathartics or other medi-
cines which tend to bring them to their natural
state. It is very common to find children complain-
ing of a tension pain of the forehead in hooping-
cough, and in some cases this is obviously an im-
portant symptom, and one which demands attention
in reference to practice, to practice. The further
progress and duration of hooping-cough are sub-
ject to great variety. In the mildest form it
generally lasts two or three months, and when
more, is often protracted to eight or ten.
Even in mild cases after it has wholly ceased,
or nearly so, an accidental exposure to cold



has occasioned its return. Under the most favourable circumstances the decline of the disease is very gradual, and almost imperceptible. It happens, however, but too frequently, that the latter stages of the disease are attended with a formidable train of evils. In some cases a convulsive fit occurs, or one of the paroxysms, the blood rushing in upon the brain carries off the patient when the practitioner is least prepared for it. In other cases, from exposure to cold, pneumoniae symptoms supervene, and the child either dies with her lungs gorged with blood, or the foundation is laid for a species of infantile phthisis. In a third set of cases, hooping cough brings on genuine hydrocephalus, and the child dies in a state of comatose. But of all the modes by which hooping cough proves fatal, the most common is that by marasmus and infantile fever. The child after a continuance of the disease for a certain time, from causes not well understood, loses his appetite, emaciates rapidly, becomes hectic, and dies apparently

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from pure exhaustion.

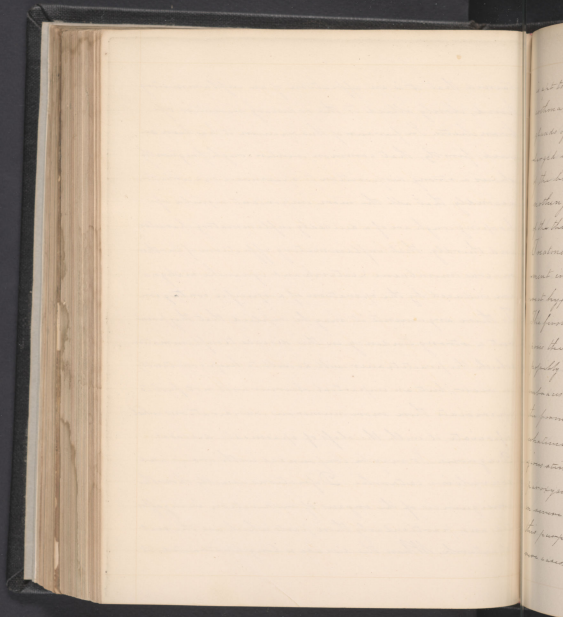
Favourable symptoms:—a moist skin, warm extremities, open bowels, plentiful expectorations, and free vomiting. The danger is not proportioned to the age of the patient, a child of two or three months old will struggle through the complaint as well as another of two or three years. When it attacks weakly or convalescing children, or those labouring under some other disease, it is apt to prove severe, tedious, and therefore dangerous. When whooping cough begins late in the spring, it is commonly milder than when its approach is towards the beginning of winter. It is always most destructive in cold climates, and in cold and damp seasons.

Different opinions have been entertained regarding the precise nature of whooping cough. It was originally considered as a spasmodic disease, allied in its more dangerous features to asthma and cholera, but acknowledged also many of the laws of communicable diseases generally. This simple and very satisfactory explanation of the pathology of whooping cough has lately been called in question; and it has been confidently main-

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tailed that it is an affection of an inflammatory kind, closely allied to the ordinary varieties of bronchitis. In favour of this opinion it has been argued, firstly, that common winter cough frequently shows a strong disposition to spasmodic exacerbations, secondly, that all the more important signs of hooping-cough are of a decidedly inflammatory character, and thirdly, that inflammatory affections of another mucous membrane (catarrh and epnanche maligna) are induced by the operation of a specific contagion. To these arguments it may be replied that they point out a strong tendency in this disease to inflammation, which the practitioner will do well to keep constantly in view, but an impartial observer will not fail to appreciate those more numerous considerations which associate it with the class of spasmodic diseases.

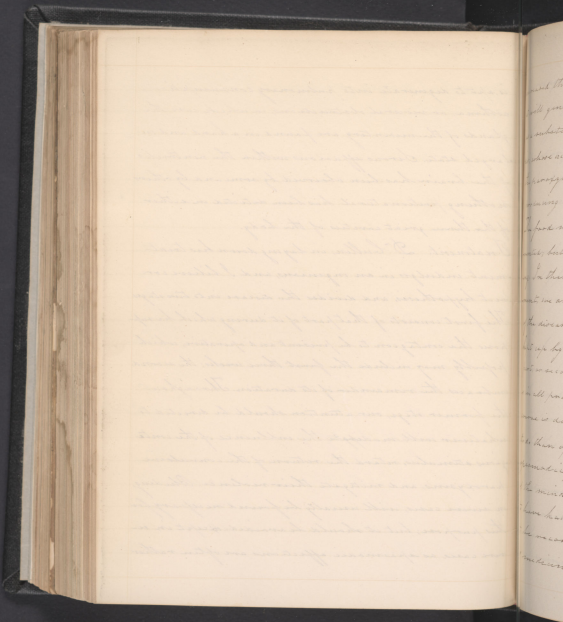
Diagnosis. It may be confounded with croup and convulsive catarrh. Distinctions usually result from the consequences of the organs of respiration being affected, and particularly those parts which are the seat of catarrh. When the disease is long protracted, it



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is apt to degenerate into tuberculous consumptions, when a, or several obstructions, in which case the glands of the mesentery are found in a hard and enlarged state. Serious effusions within the ventricles of the brain has been observed by some and by others nothing posternatural has been detected in either of the three great cavities of the body.

Treatment. Dr. Cullen, in laying down his treatment indulges in an ingenious, and I believe correct hypothesis, and divides the disease into two stages. The first consists of that part of it during which he supposes the contagion to be present and operative, which probably may include the first three weeks; the second embraces the remainder of its duration. Throughout the former stage, our attention should be directed to whatever will moderate the influence of the contagious stimulus, retard the return of the convulsive paroxysms, and mitigate their violence. Bleeding, in some cases, will usually be found necessary for this purpose; but it should be avoided except in some cases, as spasmodic affections are often rather



increased than diminished by the use of the lancet, and
it will generally be found better to employ blisters
as a substitute. The most effectual remedy is emetics,
whose action tends equally to interrupt the action of
the paroxysm, and to keep the lungs unloaded, by
exciting a determination towards the surface.

The food must be light, and certainly carefully pro-
sented; but no benefit seems to be derivable from purg-
ing. In this manner, upon Dr. Ballin's mode of treat-
ment, we are to guide the patient through that part
of the disease which we may rationally suppose to be
kept up by the stimulus of contagion. In its latter
part, or second stage, in which a morbid habit alone
is in all probability, the imitative power, a different
course is demanded. For we have now nothing more
to do than oppose the spasmodic habit by an anti-
spasmodic process. A sudden and violent emotion
of the mind, as snow-whispering tremor is well known
I have had this effect, but such a remedy is not
to be recommended, and here a different troche
of medicines have been resorted to, which may

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be arranged under the three divisions of sedatives, for the purpose of taking off the morbid irritability of the affected muscles; stimulants, for the purpose of local or general revivification; tonics, for that of both local and general re-invigoration. The sedatives chiefly made use of or recommended have been opium, hyoscinamus, belladonna, conium, sedum palustre, the muscate anti-spasmodics, and lead. Emetics were probably first employed from its being observed that vomiting is one of the common terminations of the progress, and that children who vomit, commonly pass through the disease easily. There is a great difference, however, between natural vomiting and that which is the result of vomiting medicines, more especially of tartar emetic, which has often been employed with this view. It well in fact be found in practice that frequent emetics, from their tendency to wash the stomach, are inadvisable, but from the occasional exhibition of a few grains of ipecacuanha, some benefit may reasonably be expected. Antimonial wine will be found to be extremely

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valuable in cutting short the paroxysm. I can give
it to a child two years old in the case of a tetrachol-
ic every fifteen minutes till it vomits. The compound
Syrup of Squills answers the same purpose. When the
disease has subsisted for any length of time, the
mild narcotics are decidedly useful. Of these conium
is best, and has been very generally employed since
Dr. Baillie's strong recommendation of it. The best
form to administer it is the following.

Take Extract of Conium \mathfrak{ss}

Sulphate of Magnesia \mathfrak{ss}

Camomile Water - \mathfrak{ss}

Syrup of Red poppy - \mathfrak{ss}

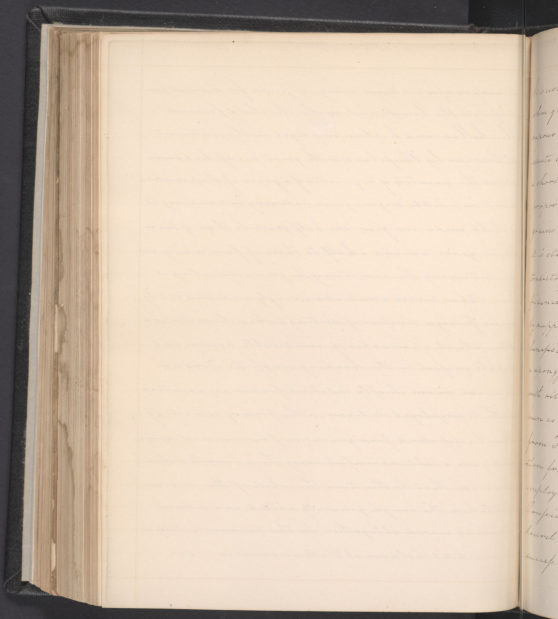
Mix. 30 drops to be taken 4 times a day.

Other practitioners have found advantage from
hyoscyamus, the lactuca viroscus, the superacetate
of lead and opium. The annexed formula has
now become very useful in many cases. Take of
the inspissated juice of the Lactuca viroscus \mathfrak{ss} .
Nitrate of potash \mathfrak{ss} . Compound powder of Tragacanth
 \mathfrak{ss} . Almond mixture \mathfrak{ss} . Mix and take

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teaspoonful 3 times a day. Opium for the most part
quiets the lungs and makes the child puerile.
The belladonna has been employed on the continent
of Europe by Hufeland, with great success, he admin-
isters the quantity of a quarter of a grain of the powdered
root in a little sugar, given morning and evening to
a child under one year: one half grain to those of two or
three years; one and a half to those of five or six years;
by continuing the dose, it may be gradually enlarged.
The Rhus toxica comes also strongly recommended by
many foreign writers of distinguished character as a
stimulant & spasmodeic of considerable power, and
highly useful in the whooping cough. Dr Ferrius
to whom we are chiefly indebted for our acquaintance
with it, employed its leaves in the form of extract. Of
this he dissolved four grains in four ounces of syrup,
and gave a table spoonful every three hours to a child.
He adds, that by the time the whole of this mixture
was taken, the cough generally abated, and in most
instances, ceased altogether. In this manner he tells us
he cured 62 children at Vallancienne in 1786.



It is certainly a very active and pungent plant, and, when given in an over dose, is a severe poison. The vapour or aroma, that issues from its juice, will often excite inflammation in the eyes when held for a short time over it. Much has been tried in all proportions and with all possible effects, from six grains to half a drachm at a time, but the effects it is stated to produce are so various, and indeed contradictory in different individuals, as to prevent confidence in its use. The accounts can only be reconciled by supposing, that in some habits it operates more beneficially than in others. The artificial muck, a spongy mass obtained by mixing nitrous acid with oil of amber, appears in every instance to have been as successful as the best and genuine muck from Thibet, and is hence well entitled to attention from its comparative cheapness. Lead has been employed in the form of Goulard's well known extract. Peruvian acid has been used in the form of cherry laurel water, for some time in Germany with great success. The stimulant plan, if it have not been

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more successful than the sedative, has at least been
a powerfully supported. Its intention is that of
taking off the propensity to spasmodic action in the
torches, by exciting a general or remote local irritation
and the medicines employed for this purpose have
been cathartics, ammonia, ether, camphor, and oil of
sassafras. The following formula may be tried
with some prospect of advantage.

Take of Turbith and Antimony \mathfrak{ss}

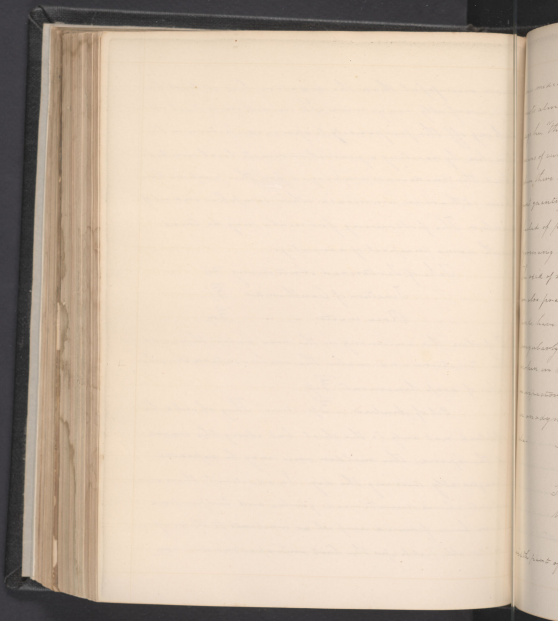
 Tincture of Cantharides \mathfrak{ss}

 Rose water - - - \mathfrak{ss}

Dissolve the antimony in the rose water, then add
the tincture and make the emulsion. Another

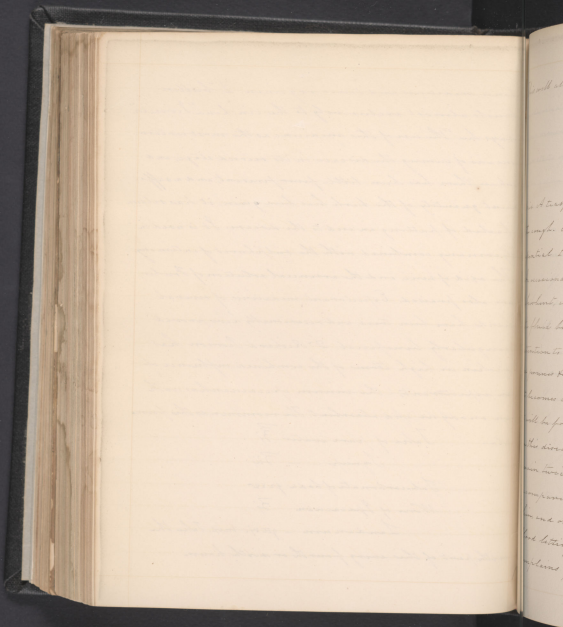
Take of soap liniment \mathfrak{ss}

 Oil of Amber - \mathfrak{ss} . This should be
applied not only to the chest, but along the course
of the spine; the milder one may be repeated
frequently during the day. In addition to the stimu-
lants above mentioned, garlic and turpentine
have been found useful as irritants to the surface.
After all, perhaps the best antispasmodics are



Some medicines and some regimens. Dr. "boston"
trusts almost exclusively to the cinchona "Londina".
says he, "The use of this medicine as the most certain
means of curing the disease in its second stage, and
when there has been little fever present, and a suffi-
cient quantity of the bark has been given, it has seldom
failed of putting an end to the disease. It is used in
Germany combined with the sulphuret of antimony.
The acid of zinc, and the arsenical solution of Fowler
are also praised. Expectoant medicines, of several
kinds, have been tried, and occasionally have proved
singularly beneficial. Dr. Richard Brown has
spoken in high terms of the combined influence of
an expectoant & the vinous specacuan, with
an emollient and absorbent. He recommends the follow-
ing.

Take of pure water ℥ij
Syrup — — ℥ij
Subcarbonate of soda gr xvj
Wine of Specacuan ℥j
Laudanum — gr xvj. Mix. Take the
sixth part of this every fourth or sixth hour.



This will also be found a good formula

Take of Chlor. Perizonii ℥ss

Syrup. of Squills ℥ss

Essence of the Antimonial Wine ℥ss

Water — — — ℥ss

This is too powerful to be taken occasionally to allay the cough. An open state of the bowels is almost essential to the favourable progress of the disease. An occasional dose of rhubarb in conjunction with an aperient, is of decided advantage. It has been observed the fluid brought up by vomiting has a sour smell; attention to diet is often sufficient; roasted apples stewed is found to. In the latter stages of hooping cough, when it becomes combined with symptoms of marasmus, it will be found best to pursue the treatment of hygie in this disease by small doses of calomel the 4 or 5th of a grain twice a day. In all severe cases, when the cough is accompanied with permanent oppression much heat of skin and other febrile symptoms, general or local blood letting ought never be omitted. When the child complains of much headache, it will be found very

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may be to apply a few leeches to the head. It has even
been observed, that the severity of the sleep has been in
its way diminished, and the acknowledged influence of
certain states of the brain upon the respiring organs
may be adduced in explanation of the fact. When the
cure proves very tedious and obstinate, resisting all
the common modes of relief, and exhausting the patient
by its continuance, we may fairly presume that it has
rooted itself in the system by the force of habit, and to
break on upon this change of air has long been found
eminently beneficial, especially where the difference of
temperament, or even temperature, can be rendered
very considerable, as from a low to a high atmosphere
from the interior of a country to the sea coast. Cold
bathing has proved more certainly and rapidly reme-
dial than any other prescription whatever, and particu-
larly where it has never been made use of before, and
hence introduces a new action into the system.

